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The Influence of Parent Attitudes and Involvement on Children's Literacy Achievement

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The Influence of Parent Attitudes and Involvement on Children's Literacy Achievement

by

Stacey Timkey

May 2015

A capstone submitted to the Department of Education and Human Development of The College at Brockport, State University of New York in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Science in Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative teacher action research project is to investigate the relationship between the educational attitudes that parents contain and the impact these attitudes have on their children's literacy achievement. Several researchers have simply examined parent involvement; this research project is designed to explore both parent involvement and parent educational attitudes. When parents have had negative experiences within education, does that correlate with their child's attitudes towards schooling? Do these attitudes have a connection with the expectations parents have for their children's literacy success? Do parents' prior experiences and attitudes in education affect the level of involvement in their child's education? It is important that to find answers to these questions so teachers, educators and parents can improve student literacy achievement. If there is a correlation between parent's attitudes and student literacy achievement, programs can be implemented that intervene and establish a stronger more positive family-school relationship.

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Chapter One: Introduction

I would like to begin my introduction with an anecdotal story, from a preschool participant.

This story begins on a snowy Monday in mid-February. After reading the story “Lola at the Library” written by Anna McQuinn (2006) a discussion with students about their experiences at the library has ensued. This particular student is a four-year-old African American male, whom I shall refer to as Brandon throughout my study. I begin the conversation by asking the student if he likes to visit the library with his family.

Brandon: “Library...I don’t...what’s a library?”

Ms. Stacey: “A library is a building where lots of books are. Boys and girls and their families can go to the library to borrow books to take home.”

Brandon: “Is that where the girl was?”

Ms. Stacey: “Yes! Lola goes to the library with her mommy in the book we read today at circle.”

Brandon: “Grandma doesn’t have a car; we don’t go there.”

Ms. Stacey: “That’s ok; there are lots of ways to get to the library. Remember Lola and her mommy walked to the library?”

Brandon: “Yeah...grandma, I, and I sister could walk too!”

After this brief conversation, it became apparent that Brandon’s family experiences have barriers that may in turn hinder Brandon’s literacy successes. Brandon mentions that his grandma does not have a car to drive him to the library. Brandon’s response suggests that he

would enjoy going to the library with his family if he had the opportunity to go. This discussion helped me to see the affects family barriers may have on children.

My conversation with Brandon made me curious about how parent attitudes and involvement affect a child's literacy achievement. It is hard to envision the most effective teacher without support and involvement from parents. When reflecting on my previous experiences in the educational field, I have noticed an overarching theme- lack of parent involvement. This conversation with Brandon has lead me to question, what are parents' attitudes towards education? How do my students' parents' attitudes affect my students' attitudes and behaviors regarding the importance of school? What are the underlying factors as to why there is a lack of parent involvement?

The Problem

Parent involvement and parent educational attitudes are components of effective parent-school connections and relationships. Research has shown that parent involvement is essential for children's learning, attitudes about school, and future goals.

Susan Dauber and Joyce Epstein (1989) conducted qualitative research of elementary and middle schools to examine the extent of parent involvement at home and at school. The findings of their study indicated that teachers reported a limited amount of parent involvement within the school environment; however, parents reported they were in fact involved in their child's education. These different perspectives must be recognized, examined and understood in order to develop activities to improve parent involvement within schools (Dauber & Epstein, 1989).

The student population of schools today is very diverse. Students of different backgrounds and ethnicities bring with them into the classroom their culture and experiences.

Thus the parents of these students, based on their backgrounds and educational experiences, have different ideas, perceptions and attitudes of what their involvement in their child's education should be. The following research studies support the previous statement.

Researchers Carol Hammer, Barbara Rodriguez, Frank Lawrence and Adele Miccio (2007) performed a qualitative research study examining parenting beliefs and literacy practices of mothers of Puerto Rican descent, and to determine if a correlation could be determined between the mothers' beliefs and practices. The study revealed that Puerto Rican mothers had both traditional and progressive beliefs concerning education. That is, mothers believed that schools have the primary responsibility to educate their children. At the same time the study reveals that the participating mothers believe that they should teach their children new skills. Dr. Hammer and her research team (2007) discovered that children with home English communication were taught various early literacy skills multiple times per week, while children with school English communication were only taught these skills once a week by their mothers. The results of their research illustrated that the Puerto Rican mothers in the study considered school to be the primary source for facilitating the education of their children of education (Hammer, Rodriguez, Lawrence & Miccio 2007).

Young-Suk Kim (2009) examined how Korean home literacy practices are related to the growth of emergent literacy skills (vocabulary, letter-name knowledge, and phonological awareness) and conventional literacy skills (word reading, pseudo word reading, and spelling). The results of Kim's qualitative research demonstrated that the provision of literacy experiences within the home (i.e. home reading and parent teaching) by parents were related to children's achievement in literacy skills at the end of the study, but were not related to the rate of growth

literacy skills. Kim's research study highlights the importance that parent involvement has on a child's academic achievement.

Hwa Wei Ko and Yi Ling Chan (2009) examined the relationship between students' reading achievement and family environmental factors in Chinese and non-Chinese communities (Ko & Chan, 2009). Their qualitative research study measured: parents' evaluation of their child's early literacy skills, early home literacy activities, parent involvement in reading activities, parental attitudes toward reading and their reading habits, and the number of books owned by the parent and child. The data collected revealed that parents in the Chinese community view their children's early literacy skills as imperative. Ko and Chan (2009) through conducting their research concluded that interactions through parent-child reading, easy accessibility of books at home; and more positive attitudes toward the significance of reading are more profound in non-Chinese parents.

Several research studies suggest that parent involvement and educational attitudes differ among various ethnic populations. Furthermore, the studies indicate that some cultures view schools as the primary facilitator of their children's education and view their role in the process as limited for reasons such as teachers being the professional and trained to teach, possible limited acquisition of education, language barriers, etc. Due to these possible perceptions and barriers, educators must form positive relationships with parents to establish effective communication and build trust, which in turn may increase parent involvement, aid parents in understanding the important role they play in their child's education and strengthen the parent-school connection.

Significance of the Problem

Students enter a classroom environment with differing levels of parent involvement and attitudes towards education which may be a barrier in maximizing the students' learning potential, resulting in possible decreased academic success. Whatever the educational background or social class of their parents, research has shown that students at all grade levels experience increased academic success when their parents participate at school and encourage education and learning at home (Dauber & Epstein, 1989).

Additional research regarding the significance of parent involvement and parent educational attitudes is important because it will inform the thinking of current and future teachers and educators about parent involvement and parent attitudes regarding education and the effects these views on children's academic achievement. Further research will aid in developing an understanding of what parent involvement means and looks like to the parent. Through acquiring this information, teachers and educators will begin to be able to effectively communicate with parents regarding the important role they play in their child's education, and encourage parents of diverse backgrounds on how they can be actively involved in their child's learning at home. If such research is not conducted, teachers, educators and parents may not be aware of the importance of parent involvement and positive parental educational attitudes and its impact on student achievement and success.

Purpose for the Study

The purpose of my study is to investigate the impact differing levels of parental involvement and attitudes regarding education have on student literacy achievement. The study will allow stakeholders, including researchers, teachers, educators and parents to develop a greater awareness and understanding of the impact of parent involvement and parental academic

attitudes in order to better accommodate (and effectively address the needs of) individual student learners by seeking to answer the following questions:

- What impact does parent involvement and parental academic attitudes (positive or negative) have on a child's literacy achievement?
- What impact can parent involvement and parental academic attitudes have on students' literacy attitudes and behaviors?

Rationale for the Study

My research project is an initial investigation into the ways in which a parent's educational views impact a student's literacy achievement. This project is being conducted under the argument that parents educational views vary, and that differences in the ways parents identify education would account for meaningful variances in students' literacy development. In many instances, teachers make assumptions regarding the educational views of parents concerning literacy and how parents value this area of learning. This project will serve to expose the effects of differing levels of parent views on students' early literacy achievement. Understanding and encouraging parent involvement and the demonstration of positive attitudes concerning literacy learning are essential elements in facilitating effective literacy learning of students within the classroom setting. Research has shown that parent involvement is essential for children's learning, attitudes about school, and future goals (Dauber, 1989).

Definition of Terms

ABC Head Start: Action for a Better Community (ABC) Head-Start Program. ABC Head Start is a community action agency in partnership with the Rochester City School District. ABC Head Start's objective is to create opportunities for low-income individuals and families.

Literacy is defined in a variety of different ways by many different researchers and educators. When the term literacy is used in this study, it is meant to refer to a student's reading knowledge and writing awareness in a prekindergarten classroom.

Stakeholders are defined in several ways by researchers and educators. When the term stakeholder is used during my study, it is meant to refer to teachers, educators and parents.

Socioeconomic Status is a measure of an individual or families economic and social stance based on education, income and employment.

Summary

Parental involvement and parents who demonstrate positive attitudes to their children regarding education tends to vary among families of diverse backgrounds. While some research has been conducted on how these factors contribute to and affect the academic outcomes of children, further investigation of how parent involvement and the modeling of positive attitudes influences children's learning and development needs to be explored.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Before entering into a formal school setting, each child has acquired a unique array of background knowledge and learning experiences through the social interactions he/she has experienced in multiple environments. Much of student knowledge and experiences are gained through interactions beginning at home. Parents hold great responsibilities in raising their child and in becoming their child's first teacher. As the child's first teacher and role model, parents face the important task of having conversations, providing certain experiences and creating a literacy rich environment within the home that fosters and aids in a child's language acquisition and social and emotional development. In many of my personal experiences as a teacher, I have observed several barriers that have impacted the ability of a parent to perform such responsibilities. When a child enters formal education it is the teacher's role to create and facilitate literacy instruction that minimizes any obstacle that may hinder a child's academic achievement. As a child continues to progress through school, it is crucial to the child's success that their teachers are aware of the role parents play in a child's academic life. By becoming more conscious of the impact parents have on student literacy achievement teachers can strive to establish a trusting relationship with parents. In return, this relationship can provide access to information pertaining to the child that may be helpful in creating differentiated instruction. A strong teacher-parent connection through effective communication may also encourage positive parent involvement within and outside of the school setting. The following section will detail the research on which my research study is based, exposing pieces of research which has been neglected. My research study concerning parent attitudes and literacy achievement in pre-kindergarten is intended to help fill these gaps in current research.

Much research exists on parental involvement and literacy achievement. I wish to study parental involvement and the effect of parent attitudes on student literacy achievement. The following section will further describe the research on which my research study is supported. This literature review will further discuss in detail the importance of parent involvement and literacy achievement, and the importance of teacher-parent communication.

Importance of Parent Involvement and Literacy Achievement

Literacy is fundamental for learning in school. It has an impact on an individual's ability to participate in and to understand every aspect of school. All stakeholders in a child's education have the responsibility to ensure that children are not just able to read, but to recognize and make connections within the context of their own life, teach students' to comprehend the true meaning of what is written, and understand the role it can play in their personal lives and in the society they live in.

Dr. Hammer and her research team (2007) examined the parenting beliefs and literacy practices of mothers of Puerto Rican descent in order to determine if relationships existed between the mothers' beliefs and practices. Two groups were studied, one being home English communication and the other being school English communication. Data was collected through questionnaires to determine the mothers' background, beliefs about parenting and education, and home literacy practices. The study discovered that Puerto Rican mothers had both traditional and progressive beliefs regarding education and schooling. The research revealed that the children in the home English communication group were taught various early literacy skills multiple times per week, while children in the school English communication group were only taught these skills once a week by their mothers. Research showed that in both

groups the Puerto Rican mothers believe that school is the primary source of education (Hammer et al., 2007).

Young-Suk Kim (2009) examined how Korean home literacy practices are related to the growth of emergent literacy skills (vocabulary, letter-name knowledge, and phonological awareness) and conventional literacy skills (word reading, pseudo word reading, and spelling). Data was collected four times, in the beginning, middle, and end of the first year of preschool, and three months into the second year of preschool. The results showed that home reading and parent teaching were related to children's achievement in emergent literacy and conventional literacy skills at the end of the study, but were not related to the rate of growth in the emergent and conventional literacy skills.

Hwa Wei Ko and Yi Ling Chan (2009) examined the relationship between students' reading achievement and family environmental factors in Chinese and non-Chinese communities. Six environmental factors were measured: parents' evaluation of their child's early literacy skills, early home literacy activities, and parent involvement in reading activities, parental attitudes toward reading and their reading habits, and the number of books owned by the parent and child. The results revealed that non-Chinese parents interact more through parent-child reading, present more books in the home; and have more positive attitudes towards the importance of reading than compared to the Chinese community. The results of the research indicated that parents in the Chinese community view their children's early literacy skills highly, but engaged in fewer reading activities at home than their non-Chinese counterparts.

Yuko Okado, Karen Bierman and Janet Welsh (2014) conducted a qualitative study examining how parent demoralization and support for learning influence child school readiness.

The participants of this study were kindergarten children with low literacy and language skills and their parents from three school districts serving primarily low-income families. Data was collected on parenting difficulties, attitudes and behaviors related to learning activities, and the frequency of parent-child conversation at home. Teachers rated student's school readiness by classroom behaviors, approaches to learning, and emergent language and literacy skills. The findings of the study revealed that parent demoralization of education relates negatively with child school readiness, while parent support for learning was positively associated with child school readiness.

In a study conducted by Dr. Froiland, Dr. Davison and student Aubrey Peterson (2013), the researchers found that parent's expectations that their kindergarten-aged children would succeed in college predicted eighth-grade achievement. The research team analyzed data of more than 7,600 parents and children nationwide. The study concluded that parent expectations had a stronger effect on achievement than other various forms of parent involvement.

Yun Mo and Kusum Singh's (2008) research study focused on how parents' relationships and involvement in their children's lives affect students' school performance. Data was collected on the experiences of seventh and eighth grade students'. The study examined the effect of parents' relationships and involvement on students' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral engagement in school and school performance. The results confirmed the importance of parents' involvement in middle school students' school engagement and performance.

Importance of Teacher-Parent Communication

Research demonstrates that parent involvement in children's learning strongly correlates with student academic achievement. Programs which engage parents in reading with their

children, providing support on homework assignments, or tutoring their child using materials and instruction offered by their child's teacher, were shown to be successful (Cotton, 1989). This research suggests that when parents are involved in their child's education there is a better chance for literacy success. "Children's academic success is better predicted by a combination of parent involvement and parental expectations" (Froiland 2013, p. 34). The following studies examine the importance of programs encouraging parent involvement in education.

Kath Hirst, Peter Hannon and Cathy Nutbrown (2010) followed a preschool family literacy program with bilingual Pakistani families in the United Kingdom for one year. The program included home visits, postal communication and group meetings to collect data. Families' views were acquired through interviews at the beginning and end of the study. The study revealed that a bilingual family literacy program was effective and attainable through a preschool program

Dauber and Epstein (1989) conducted a study examining elementary and middle schools parent involvement at home and at school. The study linked parent involvement to the educational practices of the school that encouraged parent involvement within the school and home environment. Research found that teachers reported a lack of parent involvement within the school environment. Parents reported involvement in their child's education; also reporting little involvement at the school itself. The elementary and middle school parents state the need for schools and educators to offer support on how to assist their children at home.

Dr. Smetana's(2005) academic journal discusses the Collaborative Storybook Reading Program. The reading program provides interactive reading experiences for at-risk kindergarten students. The Collaborative Storybook Reading Program was created to increase student

exposure to literature and to increase the confidence and literacy skill level of parents. The Collaborative Storybook Reading Program resulted in student participants being able to retell stories and participate in whole group book discussions. The Collaborative Storybook Reading program was created due to the belief that several at-risk students' home experiences were not supporting the development of early literacy skills. This program encourages parents to provide meaningful literacy home experiences for their children, which speaks to the importance of parent at home involvement.

Funds of knowledge: Theorizing, written by Norma González, Luis C. Moll, and Cathy Amanti (2005) incorporates the concept: funds of knowledge. This book expresses that all people are competent, have knowledge and their own life experiences that give them that knowledge. This book presents ways teachers can uncover their students' families' funds of knowledge by making home visits, getting involved within the communities, etc.

The article, Creating Family Learning Communities, written by Melissa and Gail Summer (2014) discusses the importance of family engagement and teachers building a learning community with families. Melissa and Gail Summer's article gives parents and educators the tools necessary in creating a family learning community.

Summary

Parent involvement is a crucial factor in successful schools. Each student enters a classroom with various levels of parent involvement. Students may come to class with parents who have different backgrounds, levels of education, languages and differing attitudes towards education. Research has shown when parents are involved in their children's education at home their children academically perform better in school. It is important for teachers, educators and

parents to understand the importance of parent involvement, positive parent academic attitudes with regard to student achievement and success and encourage parent involvement as much as possible. It is crucial for teachers to understand the role parents play in children's lives academically. Research shows that there are differing views on parent and teacher responsibilities within various cultures. In order to best meet student needs, teachers need to establish positive connections with parents to develop an understanding of the impact of parents' beliefs, attitudes and involvement on the literacy learning and development of their young children.

Chapter Three: Study Design

Introduction

This project is an initial investigation into the ways in which a parent's educational views impact a student's literacy achievement. It is being conducted under the argument that parents involvement in their child's learning at home and the differences of how parents view education may account for meaningful variances in students' literacy development and achievement. Generally, teachers may speculate about parent involvement in their children's learning at home and parent educational views. This project will serve to expose the effects of differing levels of parent involvement and parent attitudes regarding education and its influence on students' early literacy achievement.

My Positionality as the Researcher

I graduated from The College at Brockport, State University of New York with a teaching certification in childhood education grades first through sixth. Following undergraduate graduation I accepted a position as the lead teacher in the three year old classroom at Bates-Rich Beginnings Daycare in Fairport, New York. I worked full time at Bates-Rich Beginnings for one year before I was accepted into the Literacy Education B-12 program at The College at Brockport, State University of New York. In order to best accommodate the responsibilities of graduate school I demoted myself from lead teacher to a substitute teacher at Bates-Rich Beginnings. I have also begun substitute teaching in the Spencerport Central School District and the Greece Central School District as I continue to pursue my master's degree. Literacy is a significant aspect throughout a child's life continuing into adulthood, as an educator I strive to

provide students with ample opportunities to increase their literacy skills both at school and at home.

Research Questions

I planned my methods and procedures in an effort to answer the following research questions:

- What impact does parent involvement and parental academic attitudes (positive or negative) have on a child's literacy achievement?
- What impact can parent involvement and parental academic attitudes have on students' literacy attitudes and behaviors?
- How can the establishment of a strong home-school connection positively impact a parent's view of education and increase their involvement in their children's learning?

Participants and Context

I invited fifteen preschool children, their parents and two teachers to participate in the data collection. The student participants attend preschool at the same Head Start program in an urban district within Rochester, NY. Ages of the children range from 4.0 years to 5.0 years. After distributing and collecting the parent surveys regarding their involvement and educational views on school-related activities, a selection of three children, their families and two teachers was blindly made. This random and blind selection was completed by placing each student's name inside of a cup. I then randomly select three students and contacted the chosen families accordingly.

Procedure for the Study

This study was conducted over a period of six weeks; starting February, 2015. Data was collected within February and March of 2015.

In order to explore the impact of parent involvement and parental academic attitudes, I have selected three students enrolled in the Action for a Better Community (ABC) Head-Start Program to conduct a case study. In order to ensure a reliable and valid research study I have randomly and blindly selected three participants from a class of fifteen students and their corresponding family member(s).

Family surveys were used in order to collect data of each parent's involvement and their educational attitudes. Teacher surveys were given to the student participant's teacher and teacher assistant in order to gain further insight concerning parent involvement in school related activities. A student survey was administered to unveil each child's feelings and attitudes concerning literacy. To determine students' early literacy achievement, an array of early literacy

assessments was administered to each student. The early literacy assessments administered include, Evaluating Print Awareness, Book-Handling Knowledge and Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation. In addition to these formal assessments, informal anecdotal notes were recorded biweekly for a total of six weeks. Anecdotal notes were utilized during the English Language Arts block to collect data pertaining to each student participant's behavior, participation and achievement. These formal and informal assessments were analyzed to determine a possible correlation between parent involvement, parent academic attitudes and student achievement; and to develop an understanding of the literacy achievement of each student.

Data Collection

During the course of this study, several data collection methods were utilized. Data collection methods used includes anecdotal notes (informal interview of teacher, family, student and teacher aid) and formal assessments consisting of Evaluating Print Awareness, Book-Handling Knowledge and Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation.

Anecdotal notes. During the six week data collection period I used anecdotal notes and collected artifacts that enhanced and aided in answering my research question. Student interviews were administered with questions centering on how the student feels as a reader/writer, the student's attitude towards reading/writing and the student's reading/writing frequency. I also sent home a family interview. Questions within the family interview concentrated on parent/guardian involvement and the parent/guardian educational beliefs. Teacher interviews were given to grasp the teacher's perspective of parent involvement in and outside the school environment. These interviews offered additional, more complex information of the student and parent participants. This information became beneficial in helping to explain certain observations made during the six week data collection period.

Evaluating Print Awareness. I used the Evaluating Print Awareness Assessment, adapted from Gretchen Owocki and Yetta Goodman (2002) *Kidwatching: Documenting Children's Literacy Development*, to assess the student participants' knowledge of environmental print and how written language is used in their local environment. This assessment formally assists educators in understanding students' knowledge of written language features, including graphic characteristics, letter-sound relationships and phonics (Owocki & Goodman, 2002, p.31). The

Evaluating Print Awareness Assessment allows educators to observe the strategies student participants use when responding to both familiar and unfamiliar kinds of print. Evaluating Print Awareness was administered once during the data collection period.

Book-Handling Knowledge. I used the Book-Handling Knowledge Assessment, adapted from Gretchen Owocki and Yetta Goodman (2002) *Kidwatching: Documenting Children's Literacy Development*, to assess the student participants' knowledge about specific reading materials. Why do people read? How do people handle books? How is print used to communicate? This assessment allows educators to gain insight into children's early experiences with text. The Book-Handling Knowledge assessment was given once during the data collection period.

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation Assessment. I used the Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation Assessment, adapted from Gretchen Owocki and Yetta Goodman (2002) *Kidwatching: Documenting Children's Literacy Development*, to assess the student participants' knowledge about the differences between drawing and writing. This assessment also provided insight into if and how the student creates meaning through writing; using symbols, such as: pictures, invented letters, conventionally formed letters and numbers. The Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation assessment illustrates the child's sense of directionality, understanding of linguistic terminology (letter, word, period), knowledge of reading, writing and phonological knowledge. The Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation assessment was administered once during the data collection period.

Data Analysis

First, I collected the family survey, and used this information to determine the parent's individual level of involvement and attitudes towards education. I then administered the student survey. I analyzed the data provided and compared the family and student surveys to determine any meaningful variances. I then administered the three early literacy assessments (Evaluating Print Awareness, Book-Handling Knowledge and Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation). The data was then analyzed to reveal any significant themes and correlations exposed in the data collection.

Criteria for Trustworthiness

Credibility is a key factor in establishing trustworthiness in a research study. Credibility ensures that the research study measures what is actually intended. The purpose of my research study is to collect data regarding parent educational attitudes and literacy achievement. The use of triangulation of data will help in strengthening the credibility of my research. Several methods of data collection have been utilized to create more valid data. The triangulation of parent involvement data comes from a parent survey, a student interview, and teacher interviews. Because this data is being gathered in multiple forms, it is less likely to be skewed in any way. The triangulation of literacy achievement data is being gathered through the early literacy assessments, including Evaluating Print Awareness, Book-Handling Knowledge and Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation. The use of multiple data collection methods will provide critical details concerning each participant's literacy achievement. In order to ensure credibility and a valid research study I have also randomly and blindly selected three participants from a class of fifteen students and their corresponding family member(s). This random selection of participants will help in providing valid data without researcher bias.

Dependability is another criterion for trustworthiness. Dependability addresses the issue of reliability. Dependability ensures that if the research were repeated, with the same methods and participants, similar results would be acquired. The use of multiple data collection methods have been used during my research study. Similar results would be concluded if the early literacy assessments, including Evaluating Print Awareness, Book-Handling Knowledge and Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation were conducted exactly as instructed.

Member checks have been utilized throughout my research study, as each data collection was analyzed by a second teacher. The use of member checks ensures the credibility of the study. Each data collection was analyzed by a second teacher in order to ensure they are dependable and reliable.

Limitations of the Study

Initial limitations to my study include, but are not limited to: time, sample size, lack of data and access to participants.

This study took place over a six week period of time, due to the short duration of the study, longitudinal effects may not be observed. The time allotted for the completion of my research was six weeks. Due to the time constraint a lack of data was acquired which became a significant obstacle in finding a trend and meaningful correlations throughout my collected data.

Due to the small sample size, it may be difficult to find significant relationships from the data. The small sample size may not ensure an accurate representative distribution of the population. Qualitative data may provide in depth detail, but data can be easily skewed and become invalid due to people who refuse to participate, questions that are left unanswered, and inaccurate answers.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter will discuss the results of my study conducted with three prekindergarten students, examining the impact of parent attitudes, parent involvement and literacy achievement and the results.

Alanna

Alanna is a pre-kindergarten Hispanic/African American female student who resides with her mother, father and younger sister. Alanna is a bilingual learner, speaking English and Spanish at home and at school. She is described as a happy, friendly, talkative and active four year old.

Anecdotal Notes. There are fifteen students in Alanna's pre-kindergarten classroom; ages ranging from four to five years old. The classroom is literacy rich; including a word wall, number posters, color posters and an ample amount of age appropriate books. Library books are displayed at the child's eye level and are circulated, according to the weekly theme. Alanna has the opportunity to use computers, a writing center and free expression art throughout the school day. Her classroom teacher notes that Alanna benefits from the use of bilingual language in the classroom. There are multiple bilingual visual aids throughout the classroom and school.

Teacher Survey. It has been indicated by Alanna's pre-kindergarten teacher that her attendance is good. Her classroom teacher expressed that her mother does volunteer in the classroom for parties and is prepared with questions and concerns at parent-teacher conferences. Alanna's mother is greatly involved in the success of her daughter. Her mother often asks questions on how to best prepare her daughter for kindergarten. She has also set up a meeting for Alanna to visit her kindergarten classroom. Alanna's classroom teacher reports that Alanna's

family is welcoming when at home visits occur. During this time Alanna's parents further express their concerns for the future success of their daughter and her well being. The teacher survey responses illustrated the high level of parent involvement and contributions made by Alanna's parents in the academic success of their child.

Family Survey. Based on the family survey completed by Alanna's mother, it is evident that reading to her child and going to the library is important for her child's growth in literacy. She believes that in order for her child to be successful in literacy, the parent and school staff needs to work together and have a good relationship. She has high expectations for her daughter and believes that with a higher education she will be more successful in accomplishing life goals. Based on the family survey, Alanna's mother takes full responsibility for being a parent who incorporates literacy at home and believes education is the best foundation in her child's success.

Finding Out Interview. Learning about a child's social and cultural experiences through the Finding Out Interview can provide insight into the child's way of speaking and thinking (Owocki, 2002, p. 17). Through this interview I will gain insight into Alanna's interests and attitudes related to reading and writing.

It is clear through administering the Finding Out Interview that Alanna has had a literacy rich upbringing. Alanna has learned at an early age that literacy activities are pleasurable. She shares many literacy experiences with parents, inclusive of reading, crafts, coloring and writing birthday cards. *Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers* refers to the importance of book sharing routines. Children and their parents learn ways of interacting and developing literacy language with each other by reading books together (McGee, 1990). This positive interaction between parent and child is evident in Alanna's home. Alanna was engaged

in answering the reading and writing interview questions without difficulty. Alanna expressed a love for writing, explaining that she enjoys making pictures, writing her name and making birthday cards. It is noted that Alanna's perception of a good reader is based on adult interactions. Below is an excerpt taken from the Finding Out Interview administered with Alanna.

Ms. Stacey: "Are you a good reader?"

Alanna: "No..."

Ms. Stacey: "Why do you think you are not a good reader?"

Alanna: "Cuz' I'mma' kid."









Ms. Stacey: "What do you think makes a person a good reader?"

Alanna: "My teacher, the book that she pick to read. She like to read to us."

She believes that adults are good readers due to her classroom and at home experiences with literacy. Alanna is enrolled in a classroom rich in literacy experiences, having teachers that read stories throughout the day. Alanna indicated she is aware of the tools used to write and that writing conveys messages to others. Alanna is able to communicate successfully through sentences for a variety of communicative functions (e.g. comment, questions, and respond) necessary for literacy successes.

Evaluating Print Awareness. The Evaluating Print Awareness assessment indicates the child's awareness of popular local elements. The Evaluating Print Awareness assessment was administered to discover how Alanna would respond to familiar and unfamiliar print, and to discover the strategies she used to make meaning from them (Owocki & Goodman, 2002).

Fig. 4.1 is a chart that identifies the images used when administering the Evaluating Print Awareness assessment. The assessment consisted of 14 colored pictures. Each picture was individually presented to the student. The student was asked what each picture was; Alanna's responses are indicated in the far right column.

Image	Name of Image	Child's Response
	Runts	"I don't know"
	M&M's	"Blueberries"
	Chuck E. Cheese's	"Chuck E. Cheese"
	Jelly Belly	"Valentines"
	Skittles	"Bubble gum"
	Cheerios	"Cereal"
	Lego	"I don't know"
	Hardees Charbroiled Thickburgers	"Star fish"

	Quiznos Sub mmm...TOASTY!	“A store”
	Burger King	“I don’t know”
	Wegmans	“The store Wegmans”
	Webkinz Come in and Play!	“I don’t know”
	Hot Wheels	“Fire”
	Kit Kat	“I don’t know”

Figure 4. 1- Evaluating Print Awareness: ‘Alanna’

While administering the Evaluating Print Awareness assessment it was observed that Alanna relied on the shapes within the pictures to making meaning of the images. For example, Alanna’s response to M&M’s was blueberries. Alanna stated she knew this because, “There is circles.” It can be presumed that Alanna’s visual senses picked up on the round figures within the picture to help her make meaning of the image. Based on the data collected, Alanna is aware of symbols and has begun to recognize their shapes and forms. She understands that symbols represent things but does not correspond the symbols to oral language.

Book-Handling Knowledge. Book-Handling Knowledge is a formal interaction that determines what a child knows about reading material. Book-Handling Knowledge was administered to evaluate the student's areas needing further support.

Literacy's Beginnings: Supporting Young Readers and Writers mentions that children learn book-handling skills through reading routines. The book-handling assessment was administered to assess the child's knowledge about (1) the functions of books, (2) the routines used to share them, (3) the oral discourses used to discuss them, and (4) the concepts and strategies needed to construct a meaningful text (McGee, 1990). When presented with various directed questions and requests, Alanna demonstrated an understanding of book handling skills. Alanna was able to communicate that books are for reading and correctly show the various elements such as locating a page and the cover of the book. Alanna is aware of how books are held and book directionality. Alanna demonstrated this knowledge by indicating the top and bottom of the page along with identifying the cover correctly when the book was presented to her upside down. When asked to show where we begin reading she successfully pointed to the first word on the page. Alanna continued to demonstrate her knowledge of book directionality by showing me with her finger that we read left to right. The following is an excerpt of the Book-Handling Knowledge assessment administered to Alanna.

Ms. Stacey: "Read the book to me."

Alanna: "I can't."

Ms. Stacey: "Pretend to read the book to me."

Alanna: "Okay...well...I don't know the words."

Although Alanna shows an understanding of book handling skills, she lacks the confidence to engage in the process of reading.

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation. The Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation assessment allow teachers to gain an understanding of the child's knowledge of written language functions, formats and genres (Owocki & Goodman, 2002). Alanna demonstrates an understanding of writing through her ability to write and read the letters in her name. When presented with multiple examples of writing and pictures Alanna was able to point to seven out of the ten examples of writing. When asked to explain her reasoning, she replied "Because its letters!" It is evident from analyzing Alanna's written and pictorial representation that she is using invented spelling while experimenting with writing. Her spelling is not conventional, but she does use characteristics of true spelling; they are systematic, and they demonstrate phonemic awareness (McGee, 1990).

Brandon

Brandon is a four year old, African American pre-kindergarten student. Brandon's teacher indicated that Brandon resides with his grandmother and younger sister. His prekindergarten teacher is unable to confidently say whether Brandon lives with his mother on a consistent basis. His teacher is also uncertain whether Brandon is in contact with his father.

Anecdotal Notes. When observing Brandon in his prekindergarten classroom, his behaviors were noted. While observing during circle time, Brandon got out of his seat two times. Brandon said, "I want to play now" as he walked to the dinosaur display. When his teacher asked Brandon to join his class on the circle rug he yelled, "No!" The teacher aide explained to Brandon in private that his behavior was unacceptable and that he was to apologize

to his teacher and peers and return to the rug. The second time Brandon left the circle rug to play with cars, he again was asked to come back to the circle rug. He once again yelled, “No!” and began throwing the cars against the wall. The teacher aide again explained to Brandon that his behavior was not kind to his teacher and toys. He began to cry, saying “I don’t like that book. I want to play...we always read what I don’t like.” Circle time concluded before Brandon could rejoin his peers.





Teacher Survey. His pre-kindergarten teacher expresses that Brandon is an active, smart boy who is eager to please his teachers. Although Brandon wants to please he has multiple behavioral concerns, including aggression, anger towards peers and teachers and difficulties paying attention. His teacher reports that he is being evaluated by the behavioral specialist concerning his behavior. Brandon’s classroom teacher expresses concern with his capability to express emotions in a healthy way. She also notes that Brandon struggles to stay focused on tasks that are not of personal interest. Within the classroom setting, Brandon enjoys exploring his interests on the computer, through stories and interactive play. His classroom teacher is working closely with the behaviorist specialist to increase Brandon’s classroom participation with topics of disinterest.

Family Survey. After analyzing the family survey, it is apparent that Brandon’s home life is literacy enriched. His grandmother expresses the importance of actively being involved in her grandson’s education, both in school and at home. She also stresses the importance education has on the future of children. In order to have her grandson become successful she feels it is important to be actively involved in her grandson’s schooling, often having conversations with Brandon on what is being taught in school. Brandon’s grandmother finds school to be a very

important part of being successful but also adds “it is not only the teacher’s responsibility to teach my child but my own.”

Finding Out Interview. It was noted that after conducting the Finding Out Interview with Brandon he has a strong sense of what literacy is. Brandon expressed his love for reading but could not further elaborate why he likes reading. Brandon referenced multiple family members he enjoys reading with, including his mother, grandmother and younger sister. Brandon enjoys being read to by others and is aware that he cannot read the words on the page accurately. Brandon also indicated that he enjoys writing his letters and drawing.

Evaluating Print Awareness. Fig. 4.2 is a chart that identifies the images used when administering the Print Awareness assessment. The assessment consisted of 14 colored pictures. Each picture was individually presented to the student. The student was asked what each picture was; Brandon’s responses are indicated in the far right column.

Image	Name of Image	Child’s Response
	Runts	“Candy”
	M&M’s	“M&M’s”
	ChuckE.Cheese’s	“ChuckE. Cheese”
	Jelly Belly	“I don’t know”

	Skittles	“Skittles”
	Cheerios	“Golden heart”
	Lego	“Legos”
	Hardees Charbroiled Thickburgers	“Park”
	Quiznos Sub mmm...TOASTY!	“I don't know”
	Burger King	“Burger King”
	Wegmans	“I don't know”
	Webkinz Come in and Play!	“I don't know”
	Hot Wheels	“Fire”
	Kit Kat	“Candy”

Figure 4. 2- Evaluating Print Awareness: 'Brandon'

It can be concluded after analyzing the Evaluating Print Awareness assessment that Brandon is aware of symbols and has begun to correspond symbols to oral language. Brandon is

able to match features of print to make meaning of the administered images. It was also observed that Brandon recognized the shapes and forms of the images to provide meaning. When presented with various familiar and unfamiliar kinds of print, Brandon use of strategies was noted. Brandon used colors, pictures, and textures to predict what the print might say. It is evident that Brandon has an understanding of written language features, including graphic characteristics, letter-sound relationships, and phonics. When asked about the image 'Cheerios', Brandon responded, "It's a golden heart, cuz' ya' see the heart?" Through analyzing the Evaluating Print Awareness assessment it is clear that Brandon is exposed and surrounded by environmental print which can support his current and future literacy achievement.

Book-Handling Knowledge. After conducting and analyzing the Book-Handling Knowledge assessment, it is apparent that Brandon demonstrates some understanding of book-handling skills. He was able to express that books are filled with pages that you read. When asked to show me the top of the page, Brandon responded by pointing to the bottom of the page. When asked to show the front of the book when presented with the book upside down, Brandon responded by pointing to the back of the book. When asked to open the book so we can read it, Brandon opened the book to page eight. Although Brandon did not correctly respond to each request he did demonstrate some understanding of the features of books. I chose to administer this particular assessment in an isolated area within the classroom. Even though Brandon was away from his peers, he was still distracted by the other students in the classroom.

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation. Brandon demonstrates an intermediate level of understanding literacy through writing. When asked to write Brandon drew a picture. When asked to write again Brandon drew the letter 'x', explaining "I write an 'x'." He was then asked to read what he wrote, Brandon said, "My name." At four years old Brandon highly associates writing with writing names.

Ms. Stacey: "What do you write at school?"

Brandon: "I try to do my name, but I can't."

Ms. Stacey: "Why do people write?"

Brandon: "To write their name."

When asked to write his name, Brandon correctly wrote three out of the six letters in his name. His spelling is not conventional but his writing does demonstrate some understanding of letter recognition. From analyzing Brandon's Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation assessment it is documented that Brandon is experimenting with writing through drawing pictures and writing his name.

Fred

Fred is a pre-kindergarten, Hispanic male student who resides with his mother and father. He is described as a kind, active and sometimes shy four year old.

Anecdotal Notes. The preliminary analysis began when observing Fred in his pre-kindergarten environment. When observing Fred at circle time, I noticed that he sat nicely, but did not appear to be paying attention. After the story was read his teacher asked, "Fred, what was your favorite part of the story?" After a period of processing, Fred was unable to come up

with an answer to his teacher's comprehension question and said, "I forget." After the story was read the teacher allowed the students to have a wiggle break. Fred danced and followed the words of the song, maintaining his own space and an indoor voice.

The second observation was during the dinosaur unit, which his teacher noted that he has seemed to enjoy. Fred sat nicely next to his peers. It was noted throughout this observation that Fred continued to struggle with comprehension questions. When questioned about the book read aloud at circle time, Fred was unable to appropriately answer the question without a teacher prompt. Throughout my research, I have observed Fred through whole-group, small-group, and one-on-one instruction, noting that Fred appeared to be most comfortable in a small group setting. Within a small-group setting, Fred was able to interact with peers, actively participated in conversation and maintained focus and engagement.

Teacher Survey. It is noted by Fred's pre-kindergarten teacher that he appears to lack self-independence in the classroom. His classroom teacher expressed concern with Fred's capability to complete tasks independently, including throwing out trash, washing hands, and getting dressed when age appropriate. She noted that Fred struggles with responding to questions and often requires verbal and visual support to assist in his comprehension of information. Fred's classroom teacher also noted that Fred needs an ample amount of time for processing. Furthermore, she indicates that Fred is a hands-on learner who struggles to stay focused when uninterested in the topic being discussed. According to the teacher survey, it is evident that Fred's mother is an active part of her son's life and education. His teacher expressed that his mother volunteered frequently at the beginning of the year due to her child's separation anxiety. It is noted by Fred's classroom teacher that Fred's mother and father attend all classroom events and parties. Fred is dropped off by his mother daily, which has allowed his

mother to keep an active relationship with her son's teachers. His classroom teacher expresses that his mother communicates with her on a daily basis and expresses the concerns, questions and comments she has. Fred's mother tells his teacher when he is having a good day, an off day or if something significant has happened that may change his behavior. The classroom teacher notes that Fred has a high attendance rate and completes homework timely. His parents welcome teacher suggestions and are interactive during home visits.

Family Survey. When analyzing the family survey it was noted that all of the answers Fred's mother answered were either rated 'strongly agree' or 'strongly disagree'. Fred's mother did answer one question concerning whether it is the teachers responsibility to figure out what her child is most interested in learning as 'uncertain'.

Finding Out Survey. Through analyzing the Finding Out Survey it is clear Fred has an understanding of what literacy comprises of. He explained that he enjoys reading about turtles and dinosaurs. He expressed that people read to learn; which demonstrates his knowledge as to why people read. He shares many literacy experiences with his mother, expressing that he writes, reads and makes cards for holidays with his mother. Fred expresses that he enjoys playing and fishing with his dad. He also expresses that he enjoys learning about dinosaurs. Although Fred is able to communicate through sentences for a variety of communicative functions (e.g. comment, questions, and respond) he reportedly is not demonstrating these skills consistently, especially within the classroom setting.

Evaluating Print Awareness. Fig. 4.3 is a chart that contains the 14 colored images used when administering the Print Awareness assessment. Each picture was individually presented to

the student. The student was asked what each picture was; Fred's responses are indicated in the far right column.

Image	Name of Image	Child's Response
	Runts	"I don't know"
	M&M's	"Brown M"
	ChuckE.Cheese's	"ChuckE. Cheese is where I play games"
	Jelly Belly	"Tomato"
	Skittles	"Candy"
	Cheerios	"Cereal"
	Lego	"Legos"
	Hardees Charbroiled Thickburgers	"Seabreeze"
	Quiznos Sub mmm...TOASTY!	"I don't know"
	Burger King	"Burger King"





	Wegmans	“I don’t know”
	Webkinz Come in and Play!	“I don’t know”
	Hot Wheels	“Cars”
	Kit Kat	“I don’t know”

Figure 4. 3- Evaluating Print Awareness: ‘Fred’

While administering the Evaluating Print Awareness assessment it was observed that Fred relied on the shapes within the pictures to making meaning of the images. It is observed through this assessment that Fred is able to make personal connections to the images presented. Fred correctly identified ChuckE. Cheese, stating “ChuckE. Cheese is where I play games!” Fred is aware of symbols and has begun to recognize his shapes and their forms. He understands that symbols convey ideas but does not fully correspond the symbols to oral language.

Book-Handling Knowledge. While administering the Book-Handling Knowledge assessment, Fred became tired and asked, “When will we be done? This is kinda boring.” Fred needed multiple prompts with the latter questions. I chose to do this particular assessment in an isolated area within the classroom. Even though Fred was separated from his peers, he was still distracted by the other students in the class. At the end of the book-handling assessment, Fred shared with me that he was tired and had been yawning all day. When presented with various directed questions and requests, Fred demonstrated an understanding of book handling skills. He was able to express that you read books, and that books are filled with pages and pictures. Fred

could indicate specific parts of the book including pages, cover, and the first line and demonstrated an understanding of directionality when reading. Halfway through administering the Book-Handling Knowledge assessment, I asked Fred to read the book to me, he replied “I don’t know how to read.” After this request Fred said he wanted to play and began to refuse to complete the assessment.

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation. Fred was presented with a variety of paper and writing utensils and was asked to write something. Fred drew a picture. When asked to read what he wrote, Fred replied, “Me.” Fred was then asked to write a letter, in which the letter ‘v’ was written. Fred shared that he writes his name at school. When analyzing this assessment Fred demonstrates some knowledge of writing. Though, it appears that Fred lacks the confidence in his abilities and shies away from demonstrating his knowledge. Fred did show confidence when locating his name from a list of three different looking names including his own.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

This chapter will examine the conclusions discovered based upon the findings of my study. The chapter will discuss implications, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

The purpose of my study was to explore the influence differing levels of parent involvement and parent attitudes regarding education has on student literacy achievement. The data collected and analyzed from my research was inconclusive in determining the influence parent involvement and parent attitudes have on student achievement. Although the data showed no correlation, the results of my research study exposed fundamental information on relationships within education. My study enhanced my awareness and understanding of the impact of parent involvement and parental academic attitudes on an individual child's learning and academic achievement.

Implications for Teachers and Parents

I observed a common theme throughout my research concerning positive relationships in education. Through collecting parent surveys and teacher interviews it is evident that parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships are an important aspect of student achievement. Positive parent-teacher relationships not only benefit parents and teachers, but are helpful to children as well. The collaboration between teachers and parents benefits children; teachers bring expertise based on theories of child development and experiences with children in school settings; and parents bring their unique perspectives on the individual needs of children. Having a relationship between parents and teachers encourages parents to become more actively

involved in their child's academic success. Research suggests that there is a better chance of literacy success when a parent is actively involved in their child's education. Froiland, Peterson, & Davison suggest, "Children's academic success is better predicted by a combination of parent involvement and parental expectations" (2012). Having good communication with your students allows for an honest learning environment. Open communication between teacher, student and parents can also assist in the growth of a healthy relationship.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While conducting my research I encountered several limitations that may have potentially impacted the quality of my findings.

My research question focused on the influence parent involvement and parent educational attitudes have on student achievement. In conducting my research, I noted that the measurement tool used to gather data lacked an element that would allow for the examination of parent attitudes towards education more thoroughly. I would recommend that future research on this topic investigates deeper into the lives of the participants. Future researchers should possibly include home visits to collect data concerning parent-child interactions. Home visits could provide future researchers ample information of students' home lives and experiences.

The sample size of my research study was another possible limitation encountered. The participants in this study included a blind selection of three children, their families, their teachers and teacher's aide. There was difficulty finding significant relationships within the data due to the small sample size. A recommendation for consideration into conducting future research would be to invite more children and their families to participate in the study. Having a larger

number of participants would help ensure an accurate representation of the population. In addition, having a larger number of participants for this study could produce different results.

Final Thoughts

Although the results of my research were inconclusive in answering my initial research question, I did uncover a better understanding of the importance of parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships. As teachers and educators we have no control over parents' prior literacy experiences and educational attitudes and how these factors influence their involvement in their child/children's education experience in general and literacy learning in particular. However, we as teachers and educators can control how literacy instruction is designed and facilitated within the classroom. Teachers contain the ability to construct positive experiences that children will cherish and try to replicate as adults with their own children. Teachers should understand that they can positively or negatively impact parent involvement. It is important to establish and maintain positive interactions with parents to increase parent involvement at home and in the school environment. As an educator, it is my responsibility and goal to ensure and maintain healthy parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships through a variety of communication measures. Newsletters, phone calls home, emails and parent-teacher conferences are all examples of ways educators can be proactive in sustaining communication and in establishing healthy parent-teacher and student-teacher relationships.

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8) What do you think makes a person a good writer?

Experiences that Inform Reading and Writing:

1) What kinds of things do you like to do?

2) What do you do well?

3) What do you like to learn about?

Appendix B

FAMILY LITERACY SURVEY

DIRECTIONS:

In this survey, I am interested in learning more about your thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards your child's education. This survey is to help understand different aspects of the parent/school relationship. Your answers will be evaluated individually; therefore, it is important that you indicate how **you** really feel. **THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS** because people have different opinions and feelings about their child's education.

Please read each of the statements carefully. After you read each statement, decide if you agree or disagree with the statement- please be as honest as possible.

Following each statement is a scale from 5 to 1:

Circle **5** if you STRONGLY AGREE with the statement.

Circle **4** if you AGREE with the statement.

Circle **3** if you are UNCERTAIN how you feel about the statement.

Circle **2** if you DISAGREE with the statement.

Circle **1** if you STRONGLY DISAGREE with the statement.

THERE ARE 20 STATEMENTS. PLEASE RESPOND TO EACH ONE.

Parent Name: _____

Childs Name _____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I enjoy reading to my child on a daily basis.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important to bring my child to the library.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important to be involved with my child's education.	5	4	3	2	1
It is only the teachers' job to teach my child.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important for my child to attend school every day.	5	4	3	2	1
You do not need an education to be successful.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important for my child to have many books available at home to read.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important for my child to see adults reading.	5	4	3	2	1
At home I think it is important to teach or talk about letters or words.	5	4	3	2	1
My child and I enjoy singing songs, saying poems or nursery rhymes.	5	4	3	2	1
My child's education is important to be successful in the future.	5	4	3	2	1
Parents are not responsible in finding help for their child if they are struggling in school. It is the teacher's responsibility.	5	4	3	2	1
I am interested in participating in parent groups, classes, or workshops on how to read with children.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important to have good communication with my child's teacher.	5	4	3	2	1
My child misses one or more days of school a month.	5	4	3	2	1
The teacher is responsible for figuring out what my child is most interested in learning.	5	4	3	2	1
It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the child's learning environment is safe.	5	4	3	2	1

It is the parent's responsibility to make sure the child understands what is being taught in school.	5	4	3	2	1
It is important to motivate my child to do well in school.	5	4	3	2	1
I often have conversations with my child on what is being taught at school.	5	4	3	2	1

Appendix C

Teacher Survey

1. What is the child's attendance?
2. Does the parent(s)/guardian volunteer in the classroom, if so when and for what occasion?
3. Do the parent(s)/guardian come prepared to parent teacher conferences?
4. Do the parent(s)/guardian welcome at home visits? How does the parent interact during at home visits?
5. Does the parent(s)/guardian complete and return biweekly at home volunteer sheets?

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation

Name: _____ Date _____ Grade _____

Procedures: Offer a variety of paper and writing utensils. The italicized phrases are suggestions to use to engage the child in writing. Ask the child to respond to each item, document all verbal and nonverbal responses, and save the child's drawing and writing (or a copy), recording the date, the context, and any other pertinent information.

1. Offer the materials and encourage the child to *Write something*. If the child declines, suggest that he or she *Pretend to write*.
2. *Read me what you wrote*. If child says, "I can't," ask why, and then suggest that the child *Pretend to read*.
3. *Tell me about what you wrote. What are this and this?* (Get at the terms *word, letter, sentence, period, question mark*, and so on.)
4. *Write a letter*. (Children may respond with an alphabetic letter or write a letter to someone.)
5. *What do you write at home?*
6. *What do you write at school?*
7. *Why do people write? What kinds of things do they write? Can you write (or pretend to write) any of these things?*
8. *Draw a picture*.

Figure 7-6, p. 83

(continues)

Concepts of Written and Pictorial Representation (continued)





9. Make sure the child is looking directly at his/her writing and drawing.

a. Show me your writing. Show me your drawing.

b. Is drawing the same as writing?

c. How are they alike (the same; like each other)? How are they different?

10. Enlarge the following samples to fit on a single sheet of paper or cut each apart to fit on separate cards. Ask the child *Which of these are writing? Why do you think so?*

bread	n'est-ce pas?		T5A28B
go			K
FFFFFF	<i>kitten</i>		piñata
●❖⊗⌘	Get on the bike.	RESTROOMS	▼△◀▶▲▼

11. Invite the child to write his/her name. *Do you know how to write any other names?*

12. Write three different-looking names including the child's and ask him/her to point to his/her name and read it.

Adapted from Y. Goodman (1992)












Figure 7-6, p. 83




Appendix E

Evaluating Print Awareness

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____			
Introduction			
Ensure that the situation is comfortable for the student and then explain the procedures: <i>I have some things to show you, and I'd like you to tell me what you know about them. Or, I'm going to ask you some questions.</i>			
Note whether student has had previous experience with the item:	<i>Have you ever seen this before? Where?</i>		
	1 _____	6 _____	11 _____
	2 _____	7 _____	12 _____
	3 _____	8 _____	13 _____
	4 _____	9 _____	14 _____
	5 _____	10 _____	15 _____
Note student's response to the print:	<i>What do you think it is? What do you think it says?</i>		
	1 _____	6 _____	11 _____
	2 _____	7 _____	12 _____
	3 _____	8 _____	13 _____
	4 _____	9 _____	14 _____
	5 _____	10 _____	15 _____
Note reasoning behind student's response:	<i>How do you know? What makes you think so?</i>		
	1 _____	6 _____	11 _____
	2 _____	7 _____	12 _____
	3 _____	8 _____	13 _____
	4 _____	9 _____	14 _____
	5 _____	10 _____	15 _____
Note the part of the graphic display to which student is responding:	<i>What tells you that it says . . . ? Show me with your finger where it says . . .</i>		
	1 _____	6 _____	11 _____
	2 _____	7 _____	12 _____
	3 _____	8 _____	13 _____
	4 _____	9 _____	14 _____
	5 _____	10 _____	15 _____

Figure 3-3, p. 34

Image	Name of Image	Child's Response
	Runts	
	M&M's	
	Chuck E. Cheese's	
	Jelly Belly	
	Skittles	
	Cheerios	
	Lego	
	Hardees Charbroiled Thickburgers	
	Quiznos Sub mmm...TOASTY!	
	Burger King	
	Wegmans	

 The Webkinz logo features the word "Webkinz" in a colorful, bubbly font with a blue outline. Below it, a blue banner contains the text "Come In and Play!" in white.	Webkinz Come in and Play!	
 The Hot Wheels logo consists of the words "HOT WHEELS" in a stylized, flame-like font. The letters are yellow and orange, with a red outline, set against a black background.	Hot Wheels	
 The Kit Kat logo shows the words "KitKat" in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a red, oval-shaped background that resembles a Kit Kat wrapper.	Kit Kat	

Appendix F

Book-Handling Knowledge

Name: _____ Date _____ Age _____				
Item	Administration	Instruction	Possible Responses	Child's Response
1	Show book; title covered by hand.	"What's this?" If child answers with name of book, record and ask, "What's (name of book given by child, e.g., <i>The Hungry Caterpillar</i>)?"	"book" "storybook" "story" name of book	
2	Display book.	"What do you do with it?"	"read it" "look at it" "tell it" "open it"	
3		"What's inside it?"	"story" "picture" "words" "pages" "letters" "things"	
4	Hold on to a page.	"Show me a page in this book." "Is this a page?"	Points to page. "yes"	
5		"Show me the top of this page." "Show me the bottom of this page."	Indicates top edge or toward top. Indicates bottom of page or toward bottom.	
6	Present book upside down and back toward child.	"Show me the front of this book." "Take the book and open it so that we can read it."	Any indication of front or first page. Opens to first page.	
7		"Show me the beginning of the story." "Show me the end of the story."	Points to first line or word of story. Turns to last page and points to last line or word.	

Figure 4-4. pp. 46-47

(continues)

Book-Handling Knowledge (continued)

Item	Administration	Instruction	Possible Responses	Child's Response
8	Turn back to beginning of story.	"Show me with your finger exactly where we have to begin reading."	Points to first word on page.	
9		"Show me with your finger which way we go as we read this page."	Left to right, on the page, with return sweep.	
10		"Where then?" (This may already have been done or stated in #8 or #9; if so, check off, but do not repeat.)	Top line to bottom line, with return sweep.	
11		"Read the book to me." If child declines, say, "Pretend to read it."	Record all responses.	
12	If child doesn't read book, or after child reads, continue.	"Now I'm going to read you this story. Show me where to start reading. Where do I begin?"	Indicates print on first page.	
13	Read one page.	"You point to the story while I read it." (Read slowly.)	Almost always matches spoken with written words. Sometimes matches spoken with written words.	
14	If there is print on both pages, display the pages. Read to end of story.	"Where do I go now?"	Points to the first line of print on the next page.	
15	If possible, turn to a page with print and a picture on it. Turn book upside down.	"Can you or I read this now?" "Why or why not?"	"Upside down."	

Figure 4-4, pp. 46-47

(continues)

Book-Handling Knowledge (continued)

Item	Administration	Instruction	Possible Responses	Child's Response
16	Show student how to use masking cards to close "curtains" over "window." (Use two pieces of dark cardboard.)	"Let's put some of the story in this window. I want you to close the curtains like this until I can see just one letter." "Now just two letters."	One letter correct. Two letters correct.	
17	Open "curtains."	"Now close it until we can see just one word." "Now just two words."	One word correct. Two words correct.	
18	Open "curtains."	"Show me the first letter in a word, any word." "Show me the last letter in a word."	First correct. Last correct.	
19	Remove cards.	"Show me a capital letter, any capital letter."	Points clearly to a capital letter. Points to any letter.	
20	Close book and pass it to child.	"Show me the name of the book (or story)."	Cover, flyleaf, or title page.	
21	Get at comprehension.	"Tell me something about the story."	Record response.	
22	Title page pointing.	"It says here (read title) 'by (read author).' What does 'by (author's name, e.g., Angela Johnson)' mean?"	Responds appropriately.	
23	Title page pointing.	"It says here that the book is illustrated by (read illustrator). What does that mean?"	Responds appropriately.	

Figure 4-4, pp. 46-47